1: Krasheninnikov N-5 (1736-40) 1764 Kamchadal

the birches of

Kamtſchatka are much fuller of knots and hard excreſcences than thoſe of *Europe*; but of theſe knots they make very uſeful plates, ſpoons, and cups. Mr. *Steller* obſerved, that the white poplar near the ſea was quite porous and light, which he attributed to the ſalt water; that the aſhes of this wood, laid out in the open air, turned into a ſtony ſubſtance heavy and hard, which, the longer it lies, the harder and heavier it grows. This ſtone, when broken, ſhews ſome ſpecks of iron in its ſubſtance. Sallows * and alders † are the common fire-wood in *Kamtſchatka*. The bark of the ſallow is uſed for food, and that of the alder in dying their leather; as ſhall be related more at large in another place. They have the tree tcheremough ‖ and the hawthorn ‡ of two ſpecies, one yielding a red, and the other a black fruit; of theſe they lay up a great quantity againſt winter: they have likewiſe the ſervice-tree ** in great plenty, whoſe fruit is eſteemed amongſt their moſt delicate confections.

Their principal nouriſhment is from the nuts of the ſlantza, which grows every where, both in hills and dales. This ſhrub, or tree, is truly of the cedar kind, only it is much leſs; and inſtead of growing ſtraight, it creeps along the ground. Its cones and nuts are not half ſo large as thoſe of the cedar: the *Kamtſchadales* eat them with the ſhells. Theſe, as well as the tcheremough and the hawthorn berries, are very aſtringent, eſpecially if eaten in any quantity. The greateſt virtue of theſe nuts is, that they are a good remedy againſt the ſcurvy, as all our ſeamen can witneſs: for in the moſt ſevere ſcurvy this is, as one may ſay, almoſt their only medicine; and from the tops of the ſlantza and cedar was their common drink made, ſometimes fermented, at other times drunk warm like tea; and orders were given by

* Salices.
† Alni.
‖ Padus foliis annuis. LINN.
‡ Oxyanthus fructu rubro et nigro.
** Sorbus.

the

22: Guillemard T-2 (1882) 1886 Kamchadal

133 515 that the hand could not be borne in it. Of these, as in Japan, there are many throughout the country, and they are greatly used for bathing purposes. At Malka, between Narchiki and Gunal, there is a spring of sulphurous water of great heat, in close proximity to another which is said even during the summer to stand steadily at the freezing point. We were, however, unable to visit it, and turned northward, passing across a *tûndra* nine miles in length, and uninteresting enough in such weather. We had the pleasure, however, of seeing Vodki deposited in five feet of water in consequence of having fallen asleep upon his horse, but it must be confessed that our amusement was somewhat damped by discovering that our own personal baggage had suffered a like immersion.

We camped once more in a birch-wood, and but for the proximity of these trees we should have had no little difficulty in making a fire, as the forest was dripping wet. 322 824 531 The birch is to the inhabitant of northern regions very much what the bamboo is to the native of the south. It is his general-utility tree, and without it he would indeed be badly off. The stem is used in the construction of the sledges, and the inner bark is said to be cut green and used for food. From the knotty parts of the wood good spoons are made, while the multifarious uses to which the smooth and pliant bark is adapted in the construction of dishes, cups, and vessels of all kinds are so well known by every northern traveller as to need no description. The boxes are often much

BIRCH-BARK BOX.

22: Guillemard T-2 (1882) 1886 Kamchadal

322 ornamented with stamped designs, and are occasionally painted, or
531 rather dyed, with blue and white; while the oval shape so commonly seen in Scandinavia is not infrequent. To the European traveller the tree is equally useful. Cups and other articles can be made with the greatest readiness; fires can be lighted in the wettest weather with the thin inflammable bark, and the inner layers of the latter form excellent writing-paper, the characters on which no quantity of rain will injure or render illegible.

133 The scenery some miles north of Narchiki begins to alter in
136 character, an alteration that is distinctly for the better. The monotony of the birch-forests is relieved from time to time by openings where the dense undergrowth is supplanted by little rocky knolls covered with bright mosses. The ground becomes more broken and the open spaces larger, and before long the country approximates closely in character to that which, in Scandinavia, would be designated the lower fjells. We had hitherto shot but little game, but here ptarmigan were abundant,[1] and we were able with ease to secure as many as were necessary for the table. Farther on, we came to a small stream, which was, most probably, an affluent of the Great Bolcheresk River, which debouches into the Okhotsk Sea on the western coast of the peninsula. It was crowded with dead and dying fish; and the remnants of some recently devoured ones upon the bank, together with fresh spoor of bear around them, told us that, in all probability, Bruin was not far off.

I had never before seen the tracks of this animal in such abundance, but farther north it was common enough to see the river-banks as much trampled as if a herd of cattle had been driven down to water. The bears at this season of the year live entirely upon salmon. Later, when this diet fails them, they take to berries, upon which they live until the time of hybernation, which is generally

[1] Probably a sub-species of, or perhaps identical with, the Dal-ryper or Willow Grouse of Scandinavia (*Lagopus albus*). I unfortunately omitted to preserve specimens of this bird until it was too late, and we did not shoot any after we had once begun the river journey.

CHAPTER VII.

000 KAMSCHATKA (*continued*).

We begin the river journey—Our rafts—Bad weather—Werchni Kamschatka—Melcova—A fish curral—Replenish our stores—Melcova church—*Kuklankas* and *parkas*—Extortionate demands of the natives—Curious marl cliffs—Mashura—Rows with the people—Leprosy—Piles of driftwood—Onset of the cold weather—Tschappina—We sight the great volcanoes—Our camp-life—Wild fruits—Renewed quarrels with the natives—An awkward dilemma—We win the game.

157/576 On the morning of September 1st our horse-boys departed on their return journey to Petropaulovsky. Whether it is owing to the depression peculiar to the country, so enlarged upon by Kittlitz, I cannot say, but there seems to be an utter lack of geniality among these people. They took their wages resignedly, and bade us an unceremonious adieu. Handshaking—the kindly custom in Scandinavia and other nothern countries on the termination of an engagement between master and man—appears to be unknown in Kamschatka. Perhaps after all it was better, for I do not suppose that any of us felt any great degree of affection for Vodki, and at a later period of our journey, fist-shakings would have better expressed our feelings towards the greater proportion of the people with whom we were brought in contact.

Having despatched a letter to the yacht with instructions as to the date of departure for the rendezvous at the mouth of the river, we went down to the stream to make the necessary preparations for our voyage. The only species of boat used in the interior of the country is the dug-out canoe,—a clumsily-shaped craft made

322/501

22: Guillemard T-2 (1882) 1886 Kamchadal

322 from the trunk of the *topoyina* or poplar-tree. They are generally
501 about twenty-five or thirty feet long, by two feet in beam and depth, and are made to a great extent by burning out the interior of the tree-trunk selected, the finishing only being done by means of axes. We were able to procure five of these boats, and by their aid constructed two rafts in the following manner. We lashed three together side by side, with an interval of about one foot between each, taking care to place the weakest in the middle, and on this foundation placed a platform of poles and axe-hewn planks amidships, for a length of twelve or fourteen feet. Over this platform we constructed a rough shelter-hut, with a birch-bark roof sloping away behind, and the back and sides composed of water-proof sheets which could easily be furled or removed when necessary. The other raft, which carried Louis, Cook, and our two hunters, was made in the same way, but without the hut; and owing to its having but two canoes as a foundation, was laden fully up to where its Plimsoll-mark should have been. Our natives sat at the head and stern of each canoe, wielding paddles with a spade-like handle. They were also provided with poles, the use of which, wherever the river was sufficiently shallow, they seemed greatly to prefer. Shortly before noon our preparations were completed, our men waved their adieux to the remaining three-fourths of the inhabitants of Sherowmy, and pushing out into mid-stream, we began our descent of the river.

PADDLE.

133 Immediately below the settlement the branches of the Kams-
136 chatka reunite to form a stream nearly as wide as the Thames at Hampton Court, but scarcely more than a foot or two in depth. The current is rather swift, but without rapids, and the only dangers to be apprehended are the snags beneath the surface of the water. In the upper part of the river there are not many, but, lower down, the tremendous freshets which occur on the